

## Unit 1: A Gathering of Voices

### Diagnostic Test 1

Read the selection. Then, answer the questions that follow.

If you are considering a career as a television or movie actor, don't expect a glamorous life. First, you'll need a professional agent who will help your career by arranging auditions, giving advice, and providing information about the industry. But even a great agent can't guarantee you a profitable career. When they start out, most actors must take extra jobs as waiters, bartenders, or caterers to pay their bills. The lucky ones may be tapped for bit parts, such as passersby on the sidewalk in an urban street scene. Others may be selected to play roles such as doctors, homeowners, or office workers in television advertisements. Those with especially attractive hands might appear in jewelry commercials, and those with shiny, flowing hair might be chosen to appear in spots promoting shampoo. Although such opportunities are often fun and exciting, most young actors accept the fact that their chances for becoming truly famous are slim. However, they are driven by a will to succeed, and a few actually realize their dreams. While waiting for that "big break," they learn to deal with disappointment, and they must try to be as patient as possible. They know that they will never live contented lives if they ignore their passion for the theater.

1. Why should someone considering a career as an actor not expect a glamorous life?
  - A. It may or may not be exciting to appear in television commercials.
  - B. Only people with attractive hands are chosen for jewelry commercials.
  - C. The pay is great, but professional agents usually demand high fees.
  - D. Only a few actors actually realize their dreams of becoming famous.
2. While trying to establish acting careers, why must most people take extra jobs to pay their bills?
  - A. Most new actors have unusually high bills.
  - B. Most new actors make very little money.
  - C. Most new actors try to get as many different experiences as possible.
  - D. Most new actors have poor agents.
3. An example of a "bit part" in a movie is a passerby on the sidewalk in an urban street scene. What is a "bit part"?
  - A. a major role
  - B. a singing or dancing role
  - C. a speaking role
  - D. a very small role
4. Which type of people has the best chance for winning roles in jewelry commercials?
  - A. people with high incomes
  - B. people with knowledge about gems
  - C. people with attractive hands
  - D. people with attractive smiles
5. Which of the following is the best synonym for *spots*, as it is used in this sentence: People with attractive hair are often chosen for *spots* promoting shampoo.
  - A. dots or blemishes
  - B. locations
  - C. commercials
  - D. movies
6. What makes young actors keep trying, even though they may never find fame and success?
  - A. a will to succeed
  - B. a contented life
  - C. attractive hands
  - D. information about the industry

7. What is the meaning of the idiom *big break* in the sentence *Young actors wait for that "big break"*?
- A. a promotion in their job, such as to the position of head waiter
  - B. an acting job that gives their career a boost
  - C. an accident that brings recognition
  - D. an understanding with their agent

Read the selection. Then, answer the questions that follow.

Ted Smitty was the meteorologist for WUCG's evening news broadcast, and viewers thought that he was the best one in the business. His forecasts were almost always correct. If he said on his early morning broadcast that it was going to rain, all the people in metropolitan Cleveland would take their umbrellas to work. Everyone depended on his reliability, and this was often a mixed blessing. He wanted the people to trust his information as accurate, but he hated giving them bad news. That's why he had a particularly difficult time delivering his forecast this morning.

"We'll be seeing a mix of cloudy weather and rain all week," he reported, "and Saturday will be the worst. Tempests will be blowing in from the Northeast, so put away the lawn furniture and dress for wind." Although he knew that giving bad news was just part of his job, ruining weekends for his audience was really hard. Of course it was better for people to be informed about rainy and windy weather ahead of time so that they could plan for it. Still, he felt that it was always difficult to say what nobody wanted to hear.

8. Based on this passage, what is a meteorologist?
- A. a news reporter
  - B. a weather forecaster
  - C. a weekend planner
  - D. a tempest
9. Where can people find Ted Smitty's reports?
- A. on the radio
  - B. in the local newspaper
  - C. on television
  - D. on the Internet
10. Why did people consider Ted Smitty the best in the business?
- A. His reports were almost always correct.
  - B. His reports were always filled with good news.
  - C. He gave his reports first thing in the morning.
  - D. He often had difficulty giving his reports.
11. Based on the selection, which is the best definition for the idiom *a mixed blessing*?
- A. something that is always good
  - B. something that is always bad
  - C. something that is good, but confusing
  - D. something that is both good and bad
12. Which of the following is the best summary of Ted Smitty's report?
- A. cloudy and rainy most of the week, but sunshine on Saturday
  - B. cloudy and rainy most of the week, with the worst weather on Saturday
  - C. sun and high temperatures most of the week, with rain during the weekend
  - D. rain during the week, with colder temperatures and snow during the weekend

13. Based on the selection, what is the best definition for a tempest?
- A. a storm that always comes from the Northeast
  - B. a storm that always brings snow and ice
  - C. a storm that always brings strong winds
  - D. a storm that often proves to be a mixed blessing
14. Why did Ted advise the people to put away their lawn furniture?
- A. Summer was almost over.
  - B. They needed to take their umbrellas to work because of rainy weather.
  - C. He wanted to protect their furniture from being broken by heavy snow or ice.
  - D. He wanted to protect their furniture from being blown or smashed by strong winds.
15. Why did Ted feel that nobody wanted to hear what he had to say?
- A. He knew that bad weather would ruin many people's weekends.
  - B. He knew that most people were bored by weather reports.
  - C. He knew that every weekend for the past month had brought bad weather.
  - D. He knew that most people thought he was no longer "the best in the business."